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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer to ensure publication.

### TRIBUTES TO SOPHIA F. PALMER

#### I.

#### EXTRACTS FROM PERSONAL LETTERS

(As these letters were not intended for publication, the names of the writers are not given, but the expressions of appreciation are so spontaneous and heartfelt, it is believed they should be included with those more formally expressed.)

"Deepest sympathy in the death of Miss Palmer, the friend of us all."

"What a debt we owe her! How much she has really done, how difficult it will be to estimate,—a nation-wide, indeed, much more, an international service! Standards raised, constructive programmes carried out, information rapidly disseminated, achievements that would have been impossible without that magazine that has been her life work."

"It does not seem possible that Miss Palmer will no longer be able to furnish the strong backing that she has given the nurses for so many years. She is one of the people who have been a headlight to so many of us. I am so privileged to have had the opportunity of knowing her for even the short time that I have. I always looked forward to her visits, and felt better for a talk with her."

"We all realize the great loss she will be to our profession and the inspiration that she has given us all through the years."

"We need Miss Palmer, her sound, practical viewpoint and courage, and fearlessness in expressing it, more than ever before. I have heard more than one nurse say that she was the one person who did not lose the nurse's point of view, when she was not actively engaged in nursing, or allow the expedient and commercial to dim the professional vision."

"Miss Palmer's death is a great loss to all the nursing world, and I realize that I have lost a wonderful friend. She was never too tired or too busy to give me help and advice, and I am indebted to her for so much kindness."

"Her loss is one that will be felt everywhere she was known, both in and out of the nursing profession."

"So much of what we have to-day is due to her effort."

"I cannot help but feel that it was quite a fitting end to a busy and useful life, and one that almost anyone might hope would be their lot. Miss Palmer had suffered no mental deterioration, and I must frankly state that I have never felt that the *Journal* has been better than it has been lately."

"I do hope dear Miss Palmer had attended the Atlanta convention and had occasion to appear upon the platform—especially that the 'younger generation' present might visualize the 'path-finder' whose pioneer work in journalism has made possible the organization and progress of our profession, and keep her in memory."

"My own business career began with the *Journal*. \* \* \* I shall never forget how Miss Palmer praised that first circular I ever wrote. It gave me great courage."

"Miss Palmer was a rare woman. She devoted her best energies and her alert mind to the cause of nursing. Thousands of our profession will miss her genial presence at our gatherings. She was keen to bring forward every point

of interest, and every danger that menaced our profession, and her far seeing judgment was of great value."

"It seems almost unbelievable! How she will be missed! Her interest was so true and loyal to our profession; and her judgment always so keen and just. At the present writing I feel that her loss is a serious one at this time."

"She certainly has done a wonderful work for nursing, and has shown remarkable leadership and the power of carrying forward, with excellent judgment, determination and ability, every interest which pertained to our profession."

"The great loss in Miss Palmer's death is being felt by us all as individuals and as members of the profession to which she gave her strength. For myself it is a deep personal loss, as you well know. There is no one else who has given me just the feeling of loyalty that Miss Palmer inspired. Her friendship has been true and deep and cannot be replaced."

"I am more surprised and shocked than I can say. I had no idea that Miss Palmer's going was so imminent. I feel quite incomplete and lost."

"We have lost in Miss Palmer a great leader, and will value in the future, probably more than we do now, the important place she has filled."

"I have not only admired Miss Palmer, but loved her. We are losing so many of our fine women that it staggers one at times."

"She seemed so interested and so devoted to the same ideals she has always advocated that I can hardly realize that the visit I had with her \* \* \* is the last. \* \* \* What gifts of personal service and intelligent devotion she has offered to our profession! May we use aright the legacy of faithfulness she has left us!"

"The nursing world has lost a good friend and a wonderful worker whose place can never be entirely filled by any one woman."

"She was a wonderful woman, so kind and true. I count it a great privilege to have known her."

"There isn't one of the many times I was privileged to be with Miss Palmer at her office, at a meeting, in her home, that hasn't given me something to help, and help constantly in the various problems and difficulties always arising. I do not know how to express what having an opportunity for personal contact with her has meant, professionally and personally. I feel as if some strength and support had been taken from me."

"I heard of Miss Palmer's death only accidentally,—I can't write you how I felt about it. It seemed as if Sampson had succeeded in pulling down one of the pillars of the temple. It is a very serious loss to us and especially at this time when the country needs women with her traditions, her friendliness and her squareness."

"I am selfish enough for the profession to wish that she might have been spared at least a few years longer."

"Miss Palmer was my staunch friend in my nursing career. I went to her at Garfield Hospital immediately after finishing my training. I know something of the opposition she met there; she organized the school and did it well. She was then, and has been in all these years, an inspiration to me. I was so disappointed not to see her in Atlanta. I can't believe she is gone. The nurses never had a better friend, loyal and true."

"Her death will mean a great loss to the nursing profession throughout the entire country."

"The nurses of Kansas will feel keenly the loss of such a helpful woman."

Some of us never amount to much, no matter how hard we try, but she was a wonderful woman."

"The profession has lost one of its most valuable members and every nurse in it, a personal friend. I admired her very much indeed."

## II.

From the secretary of the Graduate Nurses' Association of Connecticut: At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Graduate Nurses Association of Connecticut, held yesterday, it was voted to send a message of sympathy on the death of Miss Sophia F. Palmer.

From the secretary-treasurer of the Vermont State Nurses' Association: I am deeply grieved to learn of Miss Palmer's death; it seems like a personal loss.

From the secretary of the Maryland State Association: Through Miss Palmer's death we feel, as every reader of the *American Journal of Nursing* must, that we have lost a friend whose wide experience and deep interest in all nurses and nursing affairs leaves a vacancy difficult to fill.

From the secretary of the New York County Registered Nurses' Association: The New York County Registered Nurses' Association wishes to express its deep sorrow because of the death of such a friend and co-worker as Miss Palmer.

From the secretary of the Alumnae Association of the City Hospital School of Nursing, Blackwell's Island, New York: At a recent meeting of our Alumnae Association, a short memorial service was held for Miss Palmer. She was best known to all of us as the Editor of the *Journal*, but we have besides a very pleasant memory of an evening spent at our school, where sitting beside an open fire, with the pupils and graduates gathered round her, she gave us the history of the starting of the *Journal*, and many other interesting experiences in her nursing life. She was also a guest at our club some few years ago, and while there endeared herself to many of the girls. At that time her adopted daughter accompanied her, and the occasion was a very happy one. We all appreciate the worth of Miss Palmer and what she has meant to the nursing profession to-day, the high and lofty spirit she has sent forth through the *Journal* has reached all groups of people, and has inspired many a one to work on.

"The nurses of District No. 8 (Saranac Lake, N. Y.) wish to extend to the nursing profession our sympathy in the great loss we sustain."

From Bertha E. McChesney, State Supervisor of School Nurses, New York: May I express through the medium of our departed leader's own pages an expression of my personal loss in her death. Miss Palmer to my mind exemplified the highest type of womanliness and sincerity. One always found at her council table sound advice and guidance in topics general, but especially those pertaining to the nursing problems had her deepest and profoundest consideration. It will be hard, nigh impossible, to accustom ourselves to the thought of her not being with us when conditions arise wherein sound judgment and advice are needed. Her passing on to life eternal is but another step upward in her bright career. To us, the nurses of America, she has thrown "the torch" with the admonition, "be yours to hold it high."

From the First District of the Illinois State Association of Graduate Nurses: It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of Sophia Palmer, editor of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING. Thousands of nurses in this country will feel her loss keenly. Miss Palmer was neither a radical nor a conservative. Her sane middle ground in matters pertaining to the nursing profession and her rare optimism made her an ideal pioneer. THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING stands

as her permanent monument. In it she leaves the product of her brains, her energy and her money. The nursing world owes this pioneer a debt of gratitude, and all she asks of us in return for her devotion is the soldier's message to his comrades: "Carry on."

From the Genesee Valley Nurses' Association, Rochester, N. Y. (formerly the Monroe County Registered Nurses' Association): The Genesee Valley Nurses' Association have learned with sorrow of the death of Sophia F. Palmer. She was a graduate of the Massachusetts General School of Nursing in her early days which were also the early days of that school. From that time until her death she was active in many lines of nursing work. In this association we have known her as its organizer and promoter, as its president, its advisor, as a sustaining member and always as its friend. She was a force wherever she was. She it was who urged us to join our alumnae, to join the Red Cross, to get in line for service and serve as many as possible. We knew her as a clear thinker and an optimist; as loyal to her older friends with whom she delighted to share the comforts of her home; as a lover of the youth and enthusiasm of her young friends who were among the joys of her life. Her personal life was an example of what she preached, and her manner of death at her post of duty was in keeping with the life she had lived. While we no longer have her as a living presence in our midst, her spirit lives in our minds and on many a printed page.

From the New York City League for Nursing Education: In Memoriam. There is probably no woman in the nursing profession whose death will bring a greater sense of loss to all nurses than that of Sophia F. Palmer, who died at Rochester April 27, 1920. She was one of the great constructive forces of the nursing profession and one of the group of pioneers who assisted with the development of nursing organizations and with the origin and progress of state registration. For twenty years she served as editor of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING and during that time the JOURNAL became a very potent factor in maintaining professional standards, and in uniting the nurses of the country in common aims and purposes. In Miss Palmer the Red Cross found an Editor ready and willing to transmit the recruiting appeals for nurses for war service. It is more than probable that the splendid response of the nurses was largely due to Miss Palmer's challenging editorials which formed a unique and splendid contribution to our nursing service in the great war. We are profoundly shocked and saddened by her loss and will all miss her wise counsel, leadership and warm loyal friendship.

From the Alumnae Association of the Lenox Hill Hospital, New York City: The Alumnae Association herewith expresses profound and sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Sophia F. Palmer, and to the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING in the passing away of the editor, Miss Palmer. Her loss is felt most keenly and the best tribute we can offer is to try and follow where she led.

From Inez C. Lord, superintendent of nurses, Rhode Island Hospital, Providence: Please permit us to take this opportunity to add the expression of deep regret and sense of loss that the nurses of our school, in common with all throughout the country, must feel in the death of Miss Palmer.

From St. Joseph's Hospital Alumnae, St. Joseph, Mo.: A Memorial. A true friend to suffering humanity, a noble and generous worker has gone to her reward, but thanks that her example, the spirit that actuated her, still is an inspiration to her sister nurses who deem it an honor and a privilege to have been a co-worker with her. During a busy life, Miss Palmer filled numerous posts

of honor and in them utilized her remarkable talent for organization to the betterment of any work with which she was connected.

From the Nurses' Alumnae of the Woman's Hospital of Philadelphia: Resolved, that as all nurses owed a debt of gratitude to Sophia F. Palmer for her very helpful advice, example, and service, also by her articles in the JOURNAL, that we try to repay it in honoring her memory, by trying to follow in her footsteps, helping each other in every manner, and by active coöperation, foster the spirit of loyalty among nurses.

#### A CONCERT AT THE FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE SCHOOL, FRANCE

Dear Editor: Enclosed I am sending you an account of the concert the nurses of the Florence Nightingale School gave on their own initiative. I am sure you and your many readers will be interested to hear of their splendid efforts. I was deeply impressed by the excellence of the literary and artistic talents displayed. Doctor Hamilton was very pleased with her "surprise party."

On Sunday afternoon, April 18, it was my privilege to attend a Concert with Lotery, organized and executed by the graduate and student nurses of the Florence Nightingale School at Bordeaux, for the benefit of their new hospital fund. It was given in honor and as a complete surprise to Doctor Hamilton. And it was a most pleasant surprise to their many friends present. The hospital was beautifully decorated with spring flowers. Each nurse, according to her various talents, had made several articles for the "Loterie." Wonderful laces and embroideries, exquisitely made baby clothes, hand painted porcelain, a large market basket with a still larger rabbit, covered with fresh vegetables, were some of the many things you could buy chances on. The concert program was varied and interesting. The opening number, a four-handed Symphony by Beethoven was played by Mesdemoiselles Hollard and Aeschiman. Next a poem, "That Which is Permitted, That Which is Forbidden" (while in a training school) was written by Madame Tétignae, a graduate nurse, and recited by Mademoiselle Guibal. Afterwards, all the nurses sang Gluck's Chorus of Orpheus. It was masterfully rendered. Perhaps the most popular numbers on the program were the "Ronde des Oiseaux," the "Ronde des Saisons" by Jacques Dalaze, and a charming Brittany song by Botrel, sung and acted by darling little girls aged from 7 to 10 year, all taking corrective exercises in the children's gymnasium at the hospital. A dialogue in verses, written by Madame Tétignac, between the Ancient Nurse, Mademoiselle Riou, and the Modern Nurse, Madame R. Forsano, cleverly acted, kept the audience in a continuous uproar of laughter. Another dialogue in verses, also written by a nurse, Mademoiselle Bravais, The Soul of the Florence Nightingale School, the Spirit of the Home, interpreted by Mesdemoiselles Paron and Vurpillot, was an instructive discussion of the benefits derived from a good education at home before entering the training school. Both of the dialogues were excellent propaganda for the general public, as there is still an idea in France that nurses need little, if any, education. Mademoiselle Cormier, in a lovely shepherdess costume of the period, sang four Louis XV Bergerettes charmingly, and Mademoiselle Charensol recited "La Dame à La Lampe," adapted from Longfellow. The concert ended with the singing by the nurses of a new school song written for the occasion, "Vive a Jamais Doctor Hamilton and the New School at Bagatelle." Refreshments and cakes of all kinds, prepared by the nurses themselves, were served in the lovely old garden. Thus ended a very successful afternoon, with the handsome sum of eight thousand francs added to the fund for the new hospital. If the American nurses, who subscribed so generously to the new